

10/18 14 October 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: EXECUTIVE

Executive Registry

SUBJECT: Agency activities relating to coding and abstracting of intelligence information.

REFERENCE: Management memo to AD/OCD, 16 September 1949, same subject.

1. Reference memorandum is forwarded for your perusal and action. In my opinion it does not, however well-intentioned, contribute anything of value to the Agency at the present time. I believe it should either be scrapped or placed in cold storage for future reference.

2. If acted upon, these recommendations would either abolish the Industrial Register and Biographic Register functions entirely, (just at the time when the two Registers are getting on their feet and beginning to produce as was long ago planned by Management), or else would transfer them on paper to the CIA Library which would have to absorb the present Register files and staffs.

3. The proposal that ORE and OSI branches perform all coding and abstracting represents over-enthusiastic approval by Management of an OCD experiment (originally undertaken in the face of Management disapproval) which is proving successful. I welcome, and am grateful for, Management's generous readiness to change its stand on the problem; but I am absolutely certain that our work toward a successful solution would be just as disastrously affected by Management's present proposal as it would be by diehard opposition. The experiment is producing good results, and OCD proposes to push it as far as possible with the means available, but it must be furthered on a step-by-step and day-to-day basis - as is being done. To eliminate OCD from the coding and abstracting entirely, as is proposed, would mean (a) that no uniform system of classification could be evolved, and hence no truly central reference system, and (b) that no complete machine index of incoming intelligence documents could be prepared - for what is everybody's responsibility is nobody's responsibility.

4. It would be well, I think, for us all to recognize that the time for sweeping reorganizations and blueprinting is largely past - if we are ever to get down to work and produce. It is now time to improve on the machine we have designed and assembled. It is just beginning to produce results in which we may feel some justifiable satisfaction, and all our effort should go into the making of adjustments, elimination of creaks and groans, and improvement by means of day-to-day hard work and experimentation. We should not now dismantle the machine and start from scratch again.

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James M. Andrews
JAMES M. ANDREWS

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Management Officer, CIA

DATE:

FROM : Assistant Director, Office of Reports and Estimates

SUBJECT: Abstracting and Coding of Intelligence Information

Reference: Memorandum of 16 September 1949 from Management Officer to
Assistant Director, Collection and Dissemination

1. The Management Staff proposal as set forth in reference memorandum sets the frame work for an intelligence reference service that is realistic and workable. It is ORE's opinion that such a program will be of invaluable assistance to the production of intelligence by establishing a machine record facility that is a direct reflection of the intelligence analysts' interests and needs.

2. ORE concurs with the proposal, with the understanding that:

a. ORE will be required to abstract only those items that it feels are necessary as a part of the intelligence file.

b. Additional manpower will be allocated to ORE in order that the added workload can be maintained.

for [REDACTED] THEODORE BABBITT

ok

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NO CHANGE in Class. ☐
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